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Vierter Aufzug, Strasse.

Zimmermeister. Und wie haben dir seine (Albas) Soldaten gefallen? u. s. w.

Jetter. Pfui! Es schnürt einem das Herz ein, wenn man so einen Haufen die Strasse hinab marschieren sieht. Kerzengerad, mit unverwandtem Blick, ein Tritt so viel ihrer sind. u. s. w.

Das ist nun natürlich ein amüsanter Anachronismus, da, wie bekannt, der militärische Gleichschritt erst seit der Mitte des 18ten Jahrhunderts (hauptsächlich in Preussen) (wieder) eingeführt wurde.—Übrigens, man glaubt aus der Stelle den Widerwillen des Frankfurters Goethe gegen die preussischen Grenadiere, die er bei seinem Besuch in Berlin genugsam Gelegenheit hatte kennen zu lernen, herauszuhören. Im Gefolge Karl Augusts wohnte er den Manövern zu Potsdam und Aken bei und spricht in Briefen an Frau von Stein (Mai 1778) seine Verwunderung aus über das ihm fremde kriegerische Treiben in der preussischen Residenz.—Da Goethe ab und zu in den folgenden zwei Jahren an seinem Stück arbeitete, so mag die Stelle von dieser Gelegenheit herrühren.

LEE M. HOLLANDER.

University of Wisconsin.

DR. JOHNSON AND H. P. STURZ

So far as the writer has been able to ascertain there is no English work upon Dr. Johnson's life, friends and acquaintances which mentions the interesting letter written by Helfreich Peter Sturz in the year 1768 and published in the German periodical *Das Deutsche Museum*, May, 1777, in which Sturz describes his visit to Johnson at the home of the Thrales. The letter has been reprinted several times in German anthologies,¹ but English writers have apparently overlooked it.

Sturz was a keen observer and "geistreicher" critic of English literature during the latter part of the eighteenth century. He accompanied the

king of Denmark on his visit to England in 1768, and owing to his interest in literature, his ability to speak the English language, and his genial personality, he became the friend of such men as Garrick, Colman, Macpherson, and Arthur Murphy.²

The most interesting fact about the above-mentioned letter (dated London, August 18, 1768) is the evidence it contains corroborating several of the anecdotes related by Mrs. Piozzi. It was undoubtedly Sturz to whom Mrs. Piozzi referred in saying: "and I remember when the king of Denmark was in England, one of his noblemen was brought by Mr. Colman to see Dr. Johnson at our country house." Sturz wrote: "Er (Dr. Johnson) hatte Colman und mich schriftlich eingeladen und es wieder vergessen. Wir überfielen ihn im eigentlichsten Verstand auf dem Landgute des Herrn Thrailes, dessen Frau, eine artige Walliserin, Griechisch zum Zeitvertriebe list und übersetzt." It is easy to understand why the anecdote which Mrs. Piozzi goes on to relate is not narrated by the man who was the butt of the joke contained in Mrs. Piozzi's story. Following close upon this anecdote Mrs. Piozzi remarks: "This . . was like the story which Mr. Murphy tells, and Johnson always acknowledged: How Mr. Rose of Hammersmith, contending for the preference of Scotch writers over the English, after having set up the authors like nine-pins, while the Doctor kept bowling them down again; at last, to make sure of victory, he named Ferguson upon Civil Society, and praised the book for being written in a new manner. "I do not (says Johnson) perceive the value of this new manner, it is only like Buckinger,³ who had no hands, and so wrote with his feet." Sturz writes as follows: "*Singularity*, rief einer, ist oft ein Zeichen des Genies. Dann, antwortete Johnson, gibt es nicht viel grössere Genieen als Wilton in Chelsea. Seine Art zu schreiben ist die singulärste von der Welt, denn er schreibt seit dem letzten Kriege mit den Füssen."

² See Hofstaetter's *Das Deutsche Museum*, Leipzig, 1908. I have not been able to consult Sturz's published works.

³ I cannot account for Sturz's changing the name to "Wilton." Buckinger was a celebrated character in his way. See the note on Buckinger in Hill's edition of the "Anecdotes."

¹ *Bibliothek d. d. Klassiker*, bd. vi; Kurz, *Handbuch d. dt. Prosa*, bd. 1.

The next paragraph in Sturz's letter begins as follows: "Colman mannte den *Rehearsal* als ein ehemals bewundertes Meisterstück, das man nicht mehr zu lesen im Stande sey: *There was to little salt in too keep it sweet*, sagte Johnson." In Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes* this story is found upon the page immediately following that describing the nobleman's visit to Johnson, and is thus related: "and when some one mentioned the ridicule thrown on him (Dryden) in the 'Rehearsal,' as having hurt his general character as an author: 'On the contrary (says Mr. Johnson) the greatness of Dryden's reputation is now the only principle of vitality which keeps the duke of Buckingham's play from putrefaction.'" These remarks of Johnson are not found in Murphy's essay, but Boswell gives them in this form: "Talking of the comedy 'The Rehearsal,' he said, 'It has not wit enough to keep it sweet.' This was easy; he therefore caught himself, and pronounced a more round sentence: 'It has not vitality enough to preserve it from putrefaction.'" Sturz certainly never saw Boswell's account, and I doubt very strongly whether Boswell ever read Sturz's letter in the *Deutsches Museum*.⁴ Sturz's statement that it was Colman who mentioned the *Rehearsal* gives an added interest to the story.

In the paragraph just preceding that containing this episode, Boswell quotes Johnson's reply to a friend (apropos another matter), "Sir, had you been dipped in Pactolus, I should not have noticed you." Curiously enough Sturz, in speaking of Johnson's pension and its value to him, says "Izt hat Johnson den Paktolus in seinen Garten geleitet." Another interesting coincidence in phraseology is found in Sturz's words immediately preceding the remark by him which I have just quoted. "In dieser Zeit schrieb er (Johnson) demosthenische Reden für und wider die wichtigsten Fragen im Parlament unter'm Namen wirklichen Glieder, die man eine Zeitlang in den Provinzen für ächt hielt, und es ist nicht allgemein bekannt, dass unter diesen die berühmte Rede Pitt's ist,—und die nie aus Pitt's Munde kam." Murphy writes as follows: "An important debate being mentioned, Dr. Francis ob-

served that 'Mr. Pitt's speech on that occasion, was the best he had ever read.' He added, 'that he had employed eight years of his life in the study of Demosthenes, and finished a translation of that celebrated author—but he had met with nothing equal to the speech above mentioned.' As soon as the warmth of praise subsided he (Dr. Johnson) opened with the words: "That speech I wrote in a garret in Exeter street."—To this discovery Dr. Francis made answer: "Then, Sir, you have exceeded Demosthenes himself; for to say that you have exceeded Francis's Demosthenes would be saying nothing." As Sturz was a friend of Murphy (Sturz stating in another letter that Murphy accompanied him on his visit to Garrick), it is probable that the above account of Johnson's parliamentary experiences Sturz got from Murphy, although Murphy's essay on Johnson did not appear until over twenty years after Sturz wrote his letter to the *Deutsches Museum*. As the earliest life of Dr. Johnson did not appear until 1784, and as Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes* came out in 1786 and Boswell's *Life* in 1791, it looks as though the earliest published anecdotes of Johnson appeared in Sturz's *Briefe eines Reisenden vom Jahre 1768*.

ALFRED E. RICHARDS.

Princeton University.

The French Renaissance in England: An Account of the Literary Relations of England and France in the Sixteenth Century. By SIDNEY LEE. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910, pp. xxiv + 494.

In his recent study of the French Renaissance in England, Mr. Sidney Lee enters once more the field of foreign influences upon Elizabethan literature, a field rather industriously gleaned of late in all directions. In addition to an extended list of monographs dealing with particular authors or literary types,—such as Mr. Lee's own earlier writings on the sonnet,—cumulative studies have already been made for each of the contributing foreign literatures. Best known of these are C. H. Herford's *Literary Relations of England and Germany in the Sixteenth Century*, and the ac-

⁴ Boswell could not have been with Sturz at this meeting because he visited the Thrales at Streatham for the first time on October 6, 1769.